

# **THE SSA/CAP GLIDER PROGRAM HANDBOOK**



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# Index

Paragraph	Page
A National Perspective	3
A State/Wing Perspective	4
At the Local Level	4
How to Start a Program	4
Becoming a Flight Under the Wing	6
Initial Senior Membership	6
Level One Training	7
Becoming a CAP Glider Pilot	7
Becoming a CAP Glider Instructor Pilot	8
Becoming a CAP Glider Check Pilot	9
Becoming a CAP Cadet Orientation Pilot	10
Is it Worth the Hassle?	10
Frequently Asked Questions	11

# THE SSA/CAP GLIDER PROGRAM

## A National Perspective

On 1 March 1996 the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and the Soaring Society of America (SSA) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The purpose of the agreement is to define and establish procedures and practices for cooperation between the SSA and CAP to promote soaring, aerospace education, and aviation development for America's youth. The MOA defined mutual cooperation, areas of operation, funding and liability issues, and cancellation procedures.

Mutual cooperation - This paragraph set forth the requirement for the two organizations to meet on an annual basis to discuss the organizational relationship, as well as, operational and program development issues.

Areas of cooperation - This section defines the areas that both organizations can agree to support, throughout the program.

Funding and liability - This paragraph allows a joint working group to address funding and liability issues for each organization.

Cancellation - This area provides procedures for either organization to terminate the MOA if cancellation becomes necessary.

The MOA commissioned a joint working group made up of CAP and SSA officials that meet each year during the SSA convention. This group is responsible for overall program development and annually assesses the program from a national perspective.

## A State/Wing Perspective

In CAP each state is organized as a Wing under the leadership of a single Wing Commander. The SSA has established a SSA State Governor for each state. These two individuals should make contact. Their contact serves as an informational link, ensuring each official is aware of activity within their area of responsibility.

## At the Local Level

This is where the program succeeds. Each CAP wing has subordinate organizations called squadrons or flights. These are much like SSA affiliated clubs. In order for the SSA/CAP program to be successful, both the CAP and SSA local organizations need the will and energy to implement the program.

## How to Start a Program

From the beginning SSA and CAP have agreed that it would be beneficial to SSA, CAP, and the local SAA affiliated club, to conduct the flight activity as an official CAP flight activity. The reason for that decision lies with liability and workmen's compensation issues. When certain flight activities (cadet orientation or cadet flight instruction) are flown in accordance with CAP Regulation 60-1, *CAP Flight Management\**, the flight is covered by the Federal Torts Claims Act (FTCA) and the CAP pilot is covered by the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA). FTCA protects CAP and the local SSA affiliate club by providing government insurance coverage for any damage, to persons or property caused by the aircraft. (Realize this is not hull insurance coverage, all aircraft other than CAP corporate owned, will need to provide their own aircraft hull insurance.) FECA provides workmen's compensation coverage to CAP senior (adult) members or their survivors in the event of personal injury or death. The CAP cadet (under 18 years of age) is covered by CAP insurance.

\* Download a copy of CAPR 60-1, Flight Management, at <http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/index.html>

The first step is to decide if the CAP Glider Program is for you and your club. The program can be administered in different ways. Since CAP Glider activities are different depending on their particular assets and strengths, one may offer a summer glider academy (5 to 10 day activity with concentrated flight instruction) and follow-on activities in the form of cadet orientation flights (these come with limited reimbursement) and cadet flight training. Others forego the rigors of the flight academy and concentrate on providing cadet orientation flights and cadet flight training on a year round basis.

If one had to pick the most productive activity, our experience has shown the year round program offering cadet orientation flights and flight instruction to be the most productive and safest activity. While flight academies are an important part of our program, they come with special circumstances that demand much attention and effort to ensure the activity is safe. A new program should have a well established year-round CAP glider activity prior to attempting a Glider Academy.

Since the nature of your CAP glider activity ultimately depends on the personalities involved, we have seen each of our glider activities started with a slightly different twist. Check a nearby Wing website for the name and contact information of other Wing Glider Program Managers. If another CAP glider activity is close, plan on making a visit.

Once you have decided the direction for your activity, you need to make it an official activity. To do this you need to approach the CAP Wing Commander with your proposal. The best way to contact the Wing Commander is to obtain contact information for the Wing Headquarters from the CAP Unit Locator at <http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/dp/dpm/unitloc.html>. If the Wing is interested, the Wing Commander should appoint an individual to assist SSA members in joining and setting up a glider flight under the wing. Most CAP Wing Commanders will automatically want to set up the glider activity at the CAP Squadron level, however I would suggest the glider activity be assigned directly under the wing as a Glider Flight. While it might take a bit longer to coordinate with the Wing Commander, many times the squadron level simply does not have the statewide perspective needed for program success. Since

your program will service units from all over the Wing/State, it just makes sense to be a flight attached directly to the wing.

## Becoming a Flight Under the Wing

The wing commander can simply appoint a CAP member to be the Glider Program Manager in charge of the glider flight activity. This individual need not be a seasoned CAP member, as long as, he has access to a CAP mentor in the wing that can guide him and his new members through the CAP sign-up procedures. In fact, experience has shown that extensive soaring experience, rather than CAP experience, is the needed quality to ensure success and safety. Many Wings put the CAP glider members in what is called a “ghost squadron.” This is an administrative unit that Wing’s can use for members with special needs.

## Initial Senior Membership

All applicants for senior membership must meet the following prerequisites:

1. Possess the desire, willingness, and capability to promote the objectives and purposes of Civil Air Patrol.
2. Must be at least 18 years old. Active duty members of the Armed Forces can join CAP as a senior member at any age.
3. United States citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the U.S.
4. No felony conviction by any court of record whether federal, state or military.
5. No pattern of arrests and/or convictions including but not limited to sex offenses, child abuse, driving under the Influence of alcohol (DUI), dishonesty and violence.
6. If you were previously in the active duty military, you must have been discharged under honorable conditions.

## Membership application:

An application along with the current Wing and National dues and a fingerprint card should be submitted to the appropriate person in the Wing. This application and fingerprint card will be sent to CAP National Headquarters for processing. (As a part of the CAP Cadet Protection Program, the FBI will screen the fingerprint card.)

Note: If needed the wing should appoint a CAP member mentor to help your folks through the sign-up procedure. If this is not readily offered, ask for assistance.

## Level One Training

Once joined you will need to complete level one training. Level one training consists of a short history of CAP, and most importantly, cadet protection training. This training should be provided by the wing, and should be relatively painless. Many wings have arranged to bring the training to the glider activity. This works well. Also if time is a factor a new CAP glider pilot may participate in CAP glider activities as long as he/she has completed the Cadet Protection portion of "level one training." This has been approved by HQ CAP/Personnel. For further information concerning the requirement for level one training contact Ms. Susan Parker, Chief, CAP Personnel at [sparker@capnhq.gov](mailto:sparker@capnhq.gov). (For an introduction to CAP download CAP Pamphlet 50-5 from the publications section of the CAP Home page at <http://www.capnhq.gov>)

## Becoming a CAP Glider Pilot

The definition of a CAP pilot is, a CAP member holding an FAA pilot certificate who is authorized to operate CAP aircraft on CAP flight activities.

To become a CAP pilot you must:

1. Be an active CAP member at least 18 years old.
2. Possess a valid FAA private or higher certificate.

3. Possess a valid medical (For powered aircraft only).
4. Satisfactorily complete a CAPF 5 flight check in an aircraft (within the appropriate group, i.e. glider-group 7) within the preceding 12 months. Download a CAP Check Ride Package from [http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/CheckridePack\\_Glider2002.pdf](http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/CheckridePack_Glider2002.pdf).
  - a. A CAP check pilot must administer the CAP Form 5 flight check. If the wing does not have a CAP glider check pilot, contact John Sharp at 334-953-2452.
5. Complete an annual CAPF 5 written examination and aircraft questionnaire for the aircraft you are authorized to fly. (Available from the Internet at <http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/>)

NOTE: CAP members need to have an initial check ride in each make and model of glider they will be flying in a CAP flight activity. After the initial check ride, they can fulfill their annual requirement by taking a single annual check ride in the glider group. Example: To fly the SGS 2-33 and the L-23, you would need an initial CAP check ride in each glider. The next year you would only need a CAP check ride in either the 2-33 or the L-23. However, you would have to complete an aircraft questionnaire in each glider you are qualified to fly during a CAP flight activity. This requirement is to ensure our pilots annually review the pilot's operating handbook for each glider they are qualified to fly during a CAP flight activity.

## Becoming a CAP Glider Instructor Pilot

To become a CAP glider instructor pilot you need to meet the following requirements:

1. Possess a current FAA authorized flight instructor certificate for gliders. (CFIG)
  2. Be CAP current and qualified in the aircraft.
  3. Be designated in writing by the region or wing commander.
- Another good reason to be assigned to the wing. For many wings the



glider program is a foreign activity, therefore the key to success is communication.

## Becoming a CAP Glider Check Pilot

For many start-up operations, having a CAP qualified check pilot will be the biggest hurdle. We at CAP Headquarters realize that a wing without a CAP glider check pilot is in a difficult situation. Therefore, we have instituted a policy to establish an initial CAP check pilot in the wing. We ask the CAP Wing Commander to agree on a highly qualified CFIG, who is a CAP member or is willing to become a CAP member, to be appointed as the Wing CAP Glider Check Pilot. Once selected the Wing Commander should apply to Headquarters, Civil Air Patrol, Director of Operations for a waiver to CAPR 60-1, Flight Management. Once appointed and the waiver is approved, the Wing Glider Check Pilot can give CAP Form 5G, check rides to other wing CAP pilots and potential check pilots. The CAP Form 5G check ride is nothing more than a demonstration of the examinees skills against the FAA Practical Test Standards to the certificate level held by the examinee.

To become a CAP check pilot one must:

1. Be an active CAP pilot at least 18 years old.
2. Possess a valid FAA glider commercial certificate.
3. Possess a current FAA CFIG certificate.
4. Completion of the National Check Pilot Standardization Course is not required for glider check pilots at this time.
5. Be current and qualified in gliders.
6. Be designed in writing by the region or wing commander. (This can be a simple letter or an order; the purpose is to keep the Wing Commander informed as to whom his check pilot's are.)

# Becoming a CAP Cadet Orientation Pilot

The following requirements must be met to be a cadet orientation pilot.

1. Be an active CAP pilot at least 21 years of age or a CFIG at least 18 years of age.
2. Have a minimum of 50 hours or 100 flights as PIC of a glider or be a CFIG.
3. Satisfactorily demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the Cadet Flight Orientation Program Syllabus to a CAP check pilot and have the CAPF 5 flight check annotated as qualified to conduct cadet orientation flights.  
(Find the Cadet Flight Orientation Program Syllabus and an open book quiz to help in your preparation at <http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/index.html>.)
4. Be designated in writing as a glider orientation pilot by the Region or Wing Commander.

## Is it Worth the Hassle?

Undoubtedly, CAP membership comes with restrictions you may not be used to at your local glider field. CAP is obligated to the U.S. government and the cadet's parents to ensure you are the type of individual that will provide a safe environment for cadets, both on the ground and in the air. Therefore, filling out a finger print card and taking a flight evaluation is a small price to pay considering the potential benefit to the sport of soaring. CAP has 25,000 aviation minded young people and soaring needs interested youth to guarantee continued growth of our sport in the United States.

Bottom line: The look on one cadet's face after his or her first glider flight is worth the hassle.

# Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I have to wear a uniform? Yes, however the CAP glider uniform is a pair of long pants or shorts with a CAP type T-shirt. That's it. What constitutes a CAP type T-shirt? Any T or Polo style shirt with a CAP theme. For instance, a special encampment T-shirt, a T-shirt or polo shirt purchased from the CAP Book Store, or a locally designed shirt with a CAP theme is fine. Obtain the book store catalog at [http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/bookstore/2001\\_Catalog.pdf](http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/bookstore/2001_Catalog.pdf)

2. Why do I have to wear a uniform? When the U.S. Department of Labor agreed to allow FECA coverage (workman's compensation insurance) to CAP pilots, it's only demand was that our pilot population look like a uniformed corps. After that decision the CAP adopted a uniform much like the U.S. Air Force. However, CAP realizes special activities such as soaring demand comfortable loose fitting clothes, therefore the uniform in question number one was approved. Bottom line: the wear of the soaring type uniform, as minimal as it is, fulfills the Department of Labor's requirement, while allowing glider activities the flexibility to wear clothing appropriate to the activity.

3. Can I fly the CAP corporate owned glider for pleasure? No, the gliders are purchased with congressionally appropriated dollars to support the congressionally mandated cadet program. Therefore, cadet flying must be the first priority of the glider program. However, CAP pilots are authorized and encouraged to maintain a high level of proficiency and with that in mind should fly when ever possible. Whether that flight is solo or dual, as long as it does not come at the expense of a cadet flight and is properly flight released, it is appropriate, and you can and should have fun.

4. Do I have to attend meetings? It's your call. Certainly you will have to stay involved enough to keep up with program changes. However, just maintaining CAP glider proficiency and flying the cadets when needed, is just fine. But, if you choose to become more active in the program, it's there for you.

5. How much time will I have to commit? Again, it's your call. Certainly, CAP would like your participation as much as possible. However, we are all busy and only have so much time to commit to a

particular endeavor, so any time you can commit is appreciated. However, realize your commitment will be making a positive difference in the life's of America's youth and that realization tends to make your commitment of time very valuable.

6. How much do I have to participate in the regular CAP program?

Your level of participation is up to you. Many opt to fly cadets and not to progress further in the program, while others progress to become CAP powered mission pilots, participating in search and rescue, as well as, other CAP missions.

7. Do I have to pay for the use of the corporate glider?

Yes, most CAP glider activities charge a nominal fee for the use of the glider when you are flying for proficiency. However, when flying cadet orientation flights or giving cadet flight instruction, either an orientation flight reimbursement or the cadet receiving instruction normally pays the cost of the flight and tow. Many units have scholarships that support the cadet flight-training program.

Helpful web addresses:

**CAP Standardization and Evaluation Page.** Has many links to flying programs in CAP.

<http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/index.html>

**CAP Flight Instructor and Check Pilot page.** Resources for flight instructors and check pilots.

[http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/Check\\_Pilot/](http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dov/Check_Pilot/)

**CAP Flight Training Page.** Contains On-line Quizzes and courses, Glider Program courses, and other useful documents.

<http://www.capnhq.gov/nhq/do/dot/index.htm>